

THE
Military Prophet's
APOLOGY;
OR,
PROBABLE REASONS

For Deserting the
EARTHQUAKE.

In a LETTER to Dr. M-DD-T-N,

*The Birds have left the Bush;
Are flown the Lord knows whither;
Are Men not wont to crush
The Nest and Wasps together?*

L O N D O N :

Printed for NATHAN FORETELL near Temple-Bar.

MDCCL.

[Price SIX-PENCE.]

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Military Prophecy

APOLLO

OR

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In a Letter from Dr. M. P. T. N.



The British Museum has the honor to acknowledge the receipt of a copy of the above work, and to inform you that it has been placed in the Library of the Museum.

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T H E

Military Prophet's A P O L O G Y, &c.

S I R,

I Doubt not, but the Failing of my Prediction is Matter of great Triumph to you: I suppose we shall see it, in the next Edition of your *Fr--- Eng---ry*, made Use of as a main Argument, for the laughing those queer Fellows, the Old Fathers, out of the World. But be not too impatient to wound them through my Side! It is true, the Cities of *London* and *Westminster* are yet standing, and so was *Nineveh*, for many Years after *Jehnah* had prophesied, That within forty Days that great City should be overthrown.

The *Ninevites* were preserved by a timely Repentance; and, for a while, I was intirely wrapt up in the pleasing Meditation, that the same Cause had produced the same happy Effect with Regard to ourselves; but it cannot be denied, that there are many Symptoms not altogether favourable to this Opinion. For

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when I began to enquire, Whether our Churches, and other Places of Divine Worship, were more frequented than before ; or, whether there was still the old Congregation, the Clerk and bare Walls? My Answer was, Most of the Folks are run out of Town. But I hope, said I, you observe a great Encrease of Charity amongst them that are left ; I hope there are more Instances of the Widow and Orphan being cloathed and fed, and the poor Debtor released, than common. As to that, said my Informer, our Nobility and Gentry are certainly very generous to Foreigners ; a great Number of *French* and *Italian* Singers, Dancers, and Tumblers, are enriched by them. Pooh ! said I, a P-x on their Charity ! But, prithee, tell me, Are not Lying and Cheating less practised in the City ? In troth, said he, you must ask my L--d-M---r. But is there not less Swearing in our Streets, said I ; less Blasphemy and Drunkness in our Publick Houses ? Oh ! yes, said he, by one Part in seven ; for, by a late Order, we poor D-v-ls are obliged to drink and swear away our *Sundays* at Home ; though I much question, whether some of us do not make themselves Amends on the Week Days. Then the Opera, the Play-House, the Tavern, the Bawdy-House, and *Ranelagh*, have lost a great many of their noble Customers ; the Run-aways, I speak of, being mostly the other End o'th' Town Gentry.--- Nay, then, cried a profligate Fellow, a Lunatick, who had sat listening to our Discourse,

hang

hang me, if there is any Earthquake yet a-while---Prithee, *George*, said I, leave thy idle Talking, and give us thy Reason for this strange Inference. ---- Why, zooks! says he, who thinks it worth while to destroy the Nest, when the Hornets are gone? His Words kindled a Fire in my very Bones; and I made no doubt but he spoke through an extraordinary Impulse, when I had well weighed them, and found how exactly they corresponded with a Dream, or Vision, which I had a few Nights before, and of which, till then, I could not divine the Meaning.

Methought I was led by the Spirit through all the Parts of this great Metropolis; and first to the Door of a certain august Assembly; but my Guide, although he seemed to be a D-v-l of Distinction, did not offer to intrude, only just peep'd in, nodded to some particular Persons, and immediately hurried away to *W-ll-m--st-r-H-ll*. There I saw a vast Number of inferior Demons, some busy in sorting Sins of different Kinds, and making them up into large Fardels; others, like Clerks, taking their Number and Weight; and others, habited like Porters, who carried them to the Top of the Roof, and piled them up to the very Clouds. These, said my Guide, are the several Perjuries, Subornations of Perjury, wilful Errors, corrupt Pleadings, unjust Verdicts, and unrighteous Judgments, which, at any Time, have been amassed in this Place. But why are they piled upon the Roof? said I; such an enor-

mous Weight, I am afraid, will break it down. Ho, ho! said he, laughing, this is a very strong Building, and has always been used to a heavy Load.

We then paid our Respects at a certain Place in St. J---s's Parish, where my Guide shewed some Inclination to have stay'd a little; but a great hook-nos'd D-v-l, ratling a Box of Dice in his Hand, put him out of Humour, by whispering in his Ear, that there had been no Gaming there last *Sunday*.

From thence we rambled to the *Exchange*, at Sight of which I own my Heart failed me, because of the vast Multitude of D-v-ls that I expected to find there, employed in collecting the Iniquities of that little Spot. But, to my great Surprize, I saw not one. *Sure*, said I, *Truth is sprung out of the Earth, and Righteousness hath looked down from Heaven*. But I did not continue long in this pleasing Error; for my Guide, turning to me with a malicious Smile, Do you see, said he, that innumerable Swarm of St--k-J--bb-rs, of all Nations, *Jews and Gentiles*? These are my Master's Factors, his Agents for this Place; he makes Use of no others; they have Talents peculiarly adapted for this Service; we have not a D-v-l in H--ll that can come near them; they are proud to act by our Commission, and from us will receive their Wages.

I was just going to pop out *Amen*, not being able to suppress the first Sally of my Indignation, when I found we were got to the C--st-m--
H--se.

H--se. There a new Object engaged my Attention; and that was, a Parcel of smutty Demons, who, having gathered together an incredible Quantity of black Frauds, sulphureous Perjuries, and Salt-Petre Evasions, were mixing them up into a Kind of *Satanical* Gunpowder; which, having strained through the Sieve of a T-de-w--t-r's Fingers, they barrell'd up into several large empty City-Consciences, that stood ready for the Purpose. As I was pondering what this should mean, the Barrels were all ordered to be convey'd under *London* Bridge. I was then no longer at a Loss for their Destination, and could not help letting fall a few Tears. Thou Fool! said my Guide, with a scornful Grin, hast not thou prophesied the Down-fall of that abominable Fabrick, and wilt thou be angry that we assist the Earthquake in fulfilling thy Prediction?

Thence he led me to the *Adm-r-lty*, and round to the other Offices belonging to the *N--y*; in all which he express'd a particular Satisfaction at the flourishing Posture of his Affairs. But nothing tickled him more, than the loud Clamours of a Company of honest Tars, who were bawling for their Wages and Prize-Money. He laughed till he chuckled again, when he saw them, after all their Escapes at Sea, shipwrecked on Shore; and after all their Services, delivered over to a Parcel of devouring Land-Sharks, who stood watching to discount their Tickets at the *low* Premium of fifteen Shillings in the Pound.

We

We then took the rest of the publick Offices in order ; in every one of which I saw a whole Legion of D-v-ls, as brisk, and busy, as Flies on a Horse's Back in Summer. But as their Employment was exactly the same with that of their Brethren, the infernal Matrosses at the *C-ft-m-H--se*, and for the same Purpose, namely, to undermine and blow up all before them, I shall not trouble you with a Repetition of Particulars.

Our next Visit was to the Play-House, but the Subject of that Evening's Entertainment being no lewd Comedy, or inflammatory Farce, but amiably moral, instructive, and decent, my Guide soon grew weary of his Post, and swore, as he went out, that next to a Sermon, he hated nothing worse than a dull, insipid Play ; but that he was afraid Things would never go better, so long as G---k was at the Head of Affairs there.

He was yet speaking, when I found myself at the Opera, where a great Number of little winged Demons, such as the Zephyrs are represented in Pictures, were very busy, flying too and fro, catching all the loose, effeminate Notes, and lewd Gestures, and conveying them through the Ears and Eyes, to the Hearts of the Audience, while others, with long Robes in their Hands, like the Muster-Rolls of Regiments, set down the Names of all such as appeared there oftner than once a Month.

We afterwards called in at several *Conforts* and *Assemblies*, at all which I observed the above Particulars ; that is to say, the same kind of wing'd Demons, and diabolical *Mustermasters*. Pray, said I to my Guide, are those Persons listed, whose Names are enroll'd in that Manner ? He made me no Answer, but stroaking me over the Eyes bade me look again ; when, Lord bless us ! what a tearing Shew of Cockades was there, which before were invisible ! scarce a Gentleman's Hat in the Company but was adorned with a large flame-coloured Ribbon, intermixed with burning Blue. The Ladies wore them upon their Breasts.

Unhappy *Britain* ! cried I, how are thy Sons and Daughters degenerated ? *Thy Land is full of Silver and Gold, therefore they please themselves in the Children of Strangers. The Shew of their Countenance doth witness against them, yea, they declare their Sin as Sodom, they hide it not.*---Hold thy Fool's Tongue, and follow me ! cried my Guide, with an angry Tone ; when, turning myself about, I perceived him standing with a Couple of his Friends in the Entrance to the *Masquerade*.

These were two D-v-ls of high Rank, their Names *Belial* and *Asmodeus* ; they shar'd between them the Office of Master of the Ceremonies, and accordingly introduced us to that illustrious Assembly. My Guide was immediately surrounded with a great Croud of young Demons, much smugger than any I had seen before, and, to all Appearance, of superior

superior Quality. These soiled not their Fingers in the dirty Business of collecting Sins and Vices, though the Place was hemm'd in on all Sides with prodigious Mountains of both, which hanging over, threatened it with Destruction every Moment; they had their Underlings to perform that Service, while themselves were busily employed, each in mimicking some one of the Company, into whose Face he screw'd his own, wriggling his Body into the same wanton Attitudes, till he had perfectly copied every betraying Smile, lascivious Glance, and debauched Gesture. What have we to do here? said I; what are these young D-v-ls making Holiday? No, I assure you, replied my Guide, laughing, they are now at School, learning their Lessons; for this, you must know, is our University, to which the Nobility of H-ll send their Children to compleat their Education. Mercy upon me! cried I, is it possible that we have profitted so much in Evil, as to become capable of teaching our Masters?

From thence we made a kind of general Progress to the Gaming-tables, Taverns, and Publick-houses; in all which, as likewise at every Stand of Hackney Coaches, and Chairs, and indeed in every Corner of the Streets, sat a vast Multitude of D-v-ls, as impossible to be numbered as an Army of Locusts, with each a great Book open before him, in which he took down, in Short-hand, an Account of all the Frauds, Perjuries, Thefts, Whoredoms, Drunken-

Drunkenness, and other Abominations, to which he was a Witness ; in particular, all the Oaths, Curses, and Blasphemies that he heard ; the Amount of which last Articles was so infinite, that it even wearied those infernal Scribes with writing, and was Matter of great Triumph to my Guide. He snuffed up the Savour of them with open Nostrils, and seem'd more than ordinary delighted with some that came strongly perfumed with Gin. That divine Liquor, cried he, how it spirits up a Mortal to Blasphemy ! What Robberies, what Murders, what Adulteries, what Variety of Guilt and Wretchedness, do we owe to it ? Has it not made, in a Manner, a whole Nation of Suicides ? Nay, cut short the Stature, as well as Years of the People, and extended its baneful Venom to all succeeding Generations ? Then, how it qualifies a Person for Hell ! Had we, before our Banishment thither, had the Advantage of such a gradual Preparative, the Fire and Brimstone, which is now so grievous to us, would have seem'd no more than a double-distill'd Cordial.

He had scarce ended his Panegyrick, when an old D-v-l came grinning to him, and clapped into his Hand the Order, by the L-d M-y-r and C--t of Al---n, for putting in Force the Laws made for the Reformation of Manners. Well, cried he, with a Smile of Contempt, tearing the Paper, and stamping it under his Foot, let them inforce or enact what Laws they will, so long as they make

none against Gin, in sparing that, they grant us every thing : While the Fountain is safe, a Fig for their Clay Dams against the Current. Indeed, should they make any Attempt against our *Magna Charta*, the Liberty of the Still, we were undone ; but hold you there ! The Mi-----rs know on which Side their Bread is butter'd. The Still affords them too many golden Drops to be in Danger. Besides, it has another excellent Property ; it is more effectual than all the Taxes put together, in keeping a stiff-neck'd People poor and submissive ; it disarms both Soul and Body ; palsies the Hand, and stupifies the Senses. The ungovernable Spirit of Oatmeal and Water has been more than once experienced. The Still furnishes a noble Antidote against all Apprehensions. It would be fine Times, truly, if the paltry Morals, nay Salvation of a People, should be put in Competition with so much Profit and Conveniency.

But though Wickedness prevails thus in publick, said I, among the Mob, and in such Places as were never very remarkable for Goodness, I hope Virtue has still the Ascendancy in private Houses. We will see that presently, said he, and immediately led me, as swift as Thought, through a great Number, in every Part of the City and Suburbs of *London* and *Westminster*. But, good Lord ! *How is the faithful City become an Harlot ? From the Sole of the Foot, even unto the Head, there is no Soundness in it, but Wounds and Bruises,*
and

and putrifying Sores : The whole Head is sick, and the whole Heart faint. Some few, indeed, we found innocently, or laudably employed *. I will cast the Veil of Silence over them, rather chusing to lament, than accuse my Brethren. A Detail of Particulars would be endless, as well as odious ; only one Thing I must not omit, although I am sensible your Vanity needs no Fewel, and that is the great Pleasure which my Guide express'd whenever we found any one reading your *Fr-- En-g--ry*.

Methought, it now began to be Peep of Day ; my Companion caught me by the Hair of the Head, and perched with me upon the Top of *St. Paul's Cathedral*. There he sat, like a Cormorant, feeding his Eyes, not like his Dam of old, with the Kingdoms of the Earth, and their Glory ; but with the Shame and threatened Destruction of this great Capital. Methought, *Hell beneath opened her Mouth without Measure* ; and upon the Roof of almost every House, was piled a Mountain of Sins, some higher than the Place where we stood ; others even with it ; some greater, some less ; but to all which, a vast Croud of D-v-ls were making perpetual Additions, by the Burthens they carried up. My Heart even fainted within me, I was like a Sparrow upon the House-top. *Good Lord, said I, How is the golden City ceased !* Why, we are overwhelmed

* Several Children asleep, and an old Woman or two at Prayers ; but, good-lack ! what were the rest doing ?

whelmed already ! Yes, cried my D-v-l, mimicking me, Hell hath enlarged herself to receive thee, she hath poured forth all her Princes to meet thee ; then set up a loud Laugh, which ran, like a Discharge of Muskets, from one infernal Legion to another.

But the first Volley of their Scorn was scarce over, when a different Noise impos'd Silence upon their Mirth. It was like the rushing of many Waters, or the trampling of an Army; when lifting up my Eyes, behold a Multitude that could not be numbered, of Men and Women, old and young ! who, with incredible Speed and Activity, climb'd up to the afore-said Mountains, caught every one his Fardel of Sins, and pouring through the Streets, like Wasps disturbed from their Nest, spread themselves over the Face of the whole Kingdom. Yea, many I saw, who tarried not, nor looked once behind them, till they came to the Water-side, where they hastened on Ship-board, and passed over into other Countries.

I was mightily pleased to see so many terrible Mountains either entirely removed, or sunk into Mole-hills, especially when I observed what Consternations the D-v-ls were in. Some hung their Ears, and tuck'd in their Tails, like a Dog that has lost a Bone, while others ran frantic about, like a Herd of Swine possessed. Methought my Guide's Countenance appeared fallen too ; but affecting an Unconcern, never mind it, Gentlemen, said he,

he, calling aloud to his Companions, let them go and take their Fardels with them, they'll only bring them back the heavier! Then, coming behind me, on the sudden he gave me a Push, the Horror of which wak'd me.

Now, Sir, what I would offer to the publick Consideration, and to yours, is this, whether I have had Justice done me, in being lock'd up for a Lunatick, when such a probable Reason may be assigned, why my Prediction has failed, and no Earthquake as yet happened; namely, the running away of those Persons for whose Punishment it might chiefly be intended; whose Sins might have a principal Weight in drawing down this Judgment upon us; or rather, might be the principal Ingredients of which the Earthquake was to have been compounded. This my Vision seems manifestly to imply; and that we are not yet out of Danger, should those who left the Town, for Fear of the Earthquake, return to it with a heavier Burthen of Iniquities than they carried out with them. Therefore, I humbly advise, that the L--d M-y-r and Al---n petition for an Order of C---cil, to forbid all such Persons to return, without bringing Certificates of their Reformation.

This will appear no chimerical Caution, if we consider, that Effects are inseparable from their Causes; and if so, I would fain know the Reason, why an Earthquake may not be carried from once Place to another, to and fro, as well as the Plague, or any contagious Distemper?

Distemper? Nay, why may it not be distributed, like a Magazine of Powder, some here, some there; a few Barrels to this Place, and a few to that? We have heard lately of an Earthquake in the *Isle of Wight*, of one at *Chester*, and another in *Lancashire*; may not all these be detached Parts of that grand one, that was to have been so fatal to this Capital, which hath been thus smuggled by these Fugitives, or rather, which hath followed them to those Places, and whose Force, being thus divided, instead of executing the Judgment threatened, hath spent itself in so many merciful Warnings? Let Enquiry be therefore made, Whether some of the above-mentioned Run-aways were not actually at the aforesaid Places, at the Time of the said Earthquakes, in what Number, and of what Rank: For should the Case prove, as I have suggested, my Prediction must be allowed to have been literally fulfilled; that is, materially, though not formally; an Earthquake having really happened, although I could not foresee that it would be run away with into so many different Parts.

But not to insist upon this, let us see if no other Reason can be assigned for our late miraculous Escape, and the Non-accomplishment of my Prophecy. There is one, which, if sufficiently apparent, would render all others unnecessary; that is, *Repentance and Reformation of Manners*. I made, indeed, some Objections to this, in the Beginning of my Letter; but

but am, by no Means, willing to give it intirely up; nay, wish it may prove the only true one. The *Ninevites* were saved by it: Let us compare our Case with theirs. The Court of *Nineveh* mourned in Sack-cloth and Ashes: That at ----- hath left off gaming on *Sundays*; and if Devotion may be measured by the Greatness of the Sacrifice, who knows, but our Self-denial may be as meritorious as their Humility? The *Ninevites* proclaimed a Fast; we have an Order to abstain from Swearing, which to some Folk is Meat, Drink and Cloathing. These are favourable Symptoms; let us not despair! When the Fountain begins to purge itself, though ever so slowly, there is great Hope that the inferior Stream will run purer by Degrees.

I was got thus far, and sat tabbering my Forehead, in order to reinforce the above Argument with the Recruit of a fresh Reason or two, when my Meditation was interrupted by the Clacks of a couple of Persons who talked pretty loud under my Window. At first I wished them at *Jamaica*; but hearing the Word Earthquake repeated several Times, Aha! said I, pricking up my Ears, perhaps the Volunteers I was beating up for, may be coming that Way: Get off thy Seat, Serjeant, and go see, however!

They were two well-dressed Gentlemen; and just as I got to the Window, Don't be too hasty, said one of them, in condemning the poor Fellow! For my Part I am not satisfied yet

yet that his Prophecy is not really accomplish'd, and that we are not actually swallowed up as he foretold we should be. Sir, said the other, this is a Subject a little too serious for Raillery. I think so too, said he, but pray tell me, is it essential to the Character of a true Prophet that he should always understand the precise Meaning of his own Prediction? I think not; and many of our Divines I know are of my Opinion. This I take to be the Case of this poor Fellow: Here an Earthquake is foreshewn; he is very illiterate, and therefore has no Notion of any but a gross material one; especially as we may suppose the two last lay still in his Head. --- And pray, Sir, said his Companion, smiling, What Sort of an Earthquake may you have gotten into yours? Oh! Sir, said he, mine is a Species for which this Kingdom hath been pretty remarkable of late Years; and which more properly belongs to the Disquisition of the Politician than the Philosopher. In short, I mean those Earthquakes that have made such Havock with our good old Constitution, swallowed up some Parts of it, and shattered others. Your Servant, Sir! said his Friend, coldly, I never heard but of Three Parts of which our Constitution was composed: Are not all of them where they were? For Example, Have we not our K--g? Yes, said he, a Most Gracious One. But even there, may not his Absence be stiled, without Impropriety, an Earthquake to his faithful Subjects? Then have we not an *H--e of L--ds*?
 Yes,

Yes, said he, a very flourishing one ; yet the Time has been, when the creating so many new Seats there, would have been looked upon as little less than an Earthquake to the Honour of the Pe---ge. We have also a *H---e of C-----ns* : Is that where it was ? Has that undergone no Mutation ? If so, Why have we not a new one chose every Year ? For G-d's Sake ! cried the other, don't speak of it : For my Part, I find an Election once in seven Years expensive enough. Sir, said he, I have no Design to call in Question the Expediency of the Septennial Act ; but let us hear the Reasons of our Ancestors, before we condemn their Customs. The Nature of Mankind, say they, is degenerate ; therefore, the best Way to avoid Corruption, will be to render it impracticable : The most effectual Method to procure the Independance of our Parliaments, will be to have such frequent new Choices, that it shall never be the Interest of a Majority to be biaffed, nor in the Power, or worth the while, of any to bias them. This, you must allow, carries the Face of an Argument ; not that I shall presume to defend it : The Advantages of our present Form have been sufficiently experienced. But it is our Government that has only Three Parts ; our Constitution has Many. There is another considerable one, the Militia, --- swallowed up, I suppose, said his Antagonist, laughing, by the Standing Army ! Swallowed up it is, said he ; but by a most deplorable Neglect. Our Ancestors, as a free
D People,

People, thought this their *natural*, and *only proper* Defence ; and, as they were the Inhabitants of an Island, their *only necessary* one. Is it not to be feared, that the Disuse of it may, in Time, extinguish all Remains of a Martial Spirit among us, and leave us no more Resemblance of our brave Fore-fathers, than the present *Italians* have to the antient *Romans*. I dread the Progress of the Fiddle ! and should think the Sword of the last, less dangerous to these Kingdoms, than the Bow of their degenerate Offspring. How are the Heads and Hearts, the Morals, Manners, and Understandings of our Youth, of both Sexes, shattered and overturned, by continued Earthquakes of Concertoes, Ridottoes, Balls, Assemblies, Operas, and Masquerades ! Are we not invaded, and overrun, by hostile Bands of *Signors* and *Signoras* ? Is there a Vice or Folly, of the Growth of any Country, that is not imported, and so industriously propagated among us, that there is hardly Room left for a single Virtue to take Root ? Pride, Luxury, and Venality overwhelm the Rich ; Idleness and Drunkenness the Poor ; Lewdness and Profaneness are a Kind of general Earthquake, from which no Rank is exempted. Then, as to our Trade, What Earthquakes has it suffered, both at Home and Abroad, from foreign Depredations, and domestic Embargoes ? An immense National Debt has intailed, as it were, an Earthquake upon the Landed Interest, and threatens to swallow up the Public Credit. Nor has the Church escaped

escaped its Concussions : That glorious Fabric ! against which, we are told, the Gates of Hell shall not prevail, though founded upon the Everlasting Rock, yet how is it rent and shaken ? Its Unity, by innumerable Schisms ; its Purity, by Pluralities, Simony, private Heresy, and public bad Example ; its Discipline, by a scandalous Neglect, not to say Contempt, of the Power of the Keys, and a general Lukewarmness among the Clergy ! Where is that Charity, which hungers and thirsts after other Mens Righteousness ? That Hope, which looks forward to the Prize of our High-Calling ? And, as to our Faith, are not the very Pillars of it shaken, by a most dreadful Earthquake of Infidelity and Profaneness ? What Numbers of Books are daily published, on Purpose to let loose the Passions, and unhinge the Principles of the Young and Unwary ? The *Painter*, the *Engraver*, the *Statuary*, are all confederate in the same Design, to lull the Conscience asleep, while they rob the Heart of its Jewels ; of every thing that can contribute to its Peace here, or Happiness hereafter. Are their Endeavours discountenanced ? No,—encouraged, propagated,—with as much Zeal, as if the divesting us of every human Virtue, every Seed of Grace, and the putting, as it were, Enmity between God and Man, was a meritorious Service. Not only Religion, but even common Decency, is insulted, and that openly,—unpunished, uncensured : While every Interest, except that of Piety and Reformation, is gree-

dily promoted. The Attack is not now against particular Outworks: The *Truth* of *Christianity* itself is called in question; nay, by some, boldly denied; its Faith ridiculed; its Doctrines traduced; its Miracles scoffed at, and its Saints and Martyrs stigmatized as Enthusiasts or Impostors. Hold, Sir! said his Friend, a Good Cause has nothing to fear from a *Free Impartial Enquiry*; but, like fine Gold, when it hath passed through the Fire, receives a fresh Testimony of its Pureness. What is Christianity the worse for these Attacks? Nothing, said he, as to its intrinsic Value; that will admit of no Diminution, either in the Head or Heart of any, who seek with Sincerity to walk in the Paths of True Wisdom and Eternal Life: But the Damage which the Church hath received in many of her Members, I am afraid, is considerable. The Wise and Good are always provided with Antidotes against such Poisons: But how many weak, illiterate, or young People, may imbibe the Venom? who may not have the good Fortune to light of a Remedy as long as they live, or not till the Malady, by a long Habit of Sin, is become incurable; till Guilt hath infected, not only the Understanding, but the Will, and they hate Health, out of Despair of being cured, though they know their Disease will inevitably plunge them into endless Perdition. Should a Man attempt to poison the Air we breathe, or the Water we drink, would he not be looked upon as a common Enemy?

nemy? How much worse are they, who lie thus in wait, to taint that Fountain which springeth up unto Everlasting Life; and to cut off from us those Irradiations of Grace, which are as necessary to the Health of the Soul, as the Air we breathe is to that of the Body? If a Person disturbs the Peace of the State, he is laid hold on, and punished: Is the Peace of the Church of no Importance? Or rather, does not the Peace of the State depend upon it? Set a Man once free from the Tie of Religion, that golden Chain of Order and Obedience, which links Earth to Heaven, and all the Obligations you can afterwards lay upon him, all the Oaths you can contrive to bind him with, will be as Threads of Tow that have touch'd the Fire. Should not a prudent Government, for its own Sake, put a Stop to such Licentiousness? If we have no Respect to the Honour of God, may we not fear, that we shall be lightly esteemed by him? Is the reviling our common Lord and Redeemer less Treason, than the speaking against a temporal Prince? Is it *Scandalum Magnatum* to traduce an earthly Peer, and none to vilify and asperse the Nobles of the Court of Heaven, the Apostles and Primitive Fathers? Sir, said his Opponent, I hope you are no *Papist*, I hope you dont place those Fathers you speak of upon a Level with the Apostles? No, Sir, said he, but in the Rank immediately next them; the Primitive Church (so long as it remained pure and uncorrupt) being, in reality, what

what the Church of *Rome* pretends to be, truly Catholick in its Doctrine and Discipline ; and in every Thing, where the Scripture is silent, or not sufficiently plain to our Apprehensions, that Guide whose Voice we are commanded to hear, and whose Decisions we ought to receive with Submission and Reverence. Sir, said the other, your Character of these Old Gentlemen is very different from that which has been lately given them : But tho' I agree with you as to their Piety, and the Purity of their Doctrine, not being able to conceive the Stream should run so near the Fountain-head ; yet may they not, in other Respects, have been what Dr. *M-dd--n* represents them, weak and illiterate, yet crafty Forgers of Miracles ; and, at the same Time, credulous and easy to be imposed upon ? Sir, said he, Let me put a Case to you : Suppose any one should tell Dr. *M-dd--n*, that his Favourite *Cicero* was a weak, credulous Fellow, and a great Romancer ; that many Things recorded by him as Matters of Fact, were false ; for Example, *Cataline's* Conspiracy ; that Part of the Story was palm'd upon, and the rest his own Invention ; would the Doctor vouchsafe such a Person a serious Answer ? Would not he think him mad ? Yet the Case is his own ; nay, in respect to himself, the Absurdity is still greater : For let any one, whose Head is not turned, or whose Heart is not wretchedly corrupt, read over these incomparable Writers ; he will find in them such sound Doctrine,

supported

supported by such Variety of invincible Arguments, and adorned with such charming Eloquence, as will soon convince him, that Men of their Abilities, inferior neither to *Tully*, or *Demosthenes*, for Reason, Penetration, or Wit, could not easily be imposed upon; and that they would wilfully impose upon others, is altogether incredible! That they, whose Writings are full of the most pathetic Exhortations against *doing Evil that Good may come of it*, should themselves lie against the Holy Spirit! That they, who by their Sufferings, may be said to have died daily in the Cause of Truth, and who sealed their Testimony with their Blood, should be the Artificers of Falshood, should dare to rush into the Presence of the God of Truth, with a lie in their Mouths! What Rancour do they betray against that Faith, for which these holy Men laid down their Lives, who represent it as standing in need of any such abominable Assistance? What Folly, to believe that any, in that Case, would have died Martyrs for it? Now, Sir, since we have already experienced so many Earthquakes, both in *Church* and *State*, can you blame me for suspending my Opinion concerning this poor Fellow's Prediction? For these are quite different Things from material Earthquakes: The fatal Consequences of those are sudden, and felt at once; but these have their private Articles, like our modern *Treaties*, by one of which you may be swallowed up, a long Time before it breaks out, and you become sensible of it.

Behold,

Behold, Sir, a *Corps de Reserve*, which hath brought me off with flying Colours ! For my Part, I was charm'd with this worthy Dialogue ! But if nothing will do ; if, after all, I am really mad, as you say ; and this Prophecy, which hath scar'd so many People, is no other than the Daughter of a crack'd Brain, which, like *Pallas* from the Head of *Jove*, hath leap'd forth, thus armed with Terrors, upon them ; I hope you will allow, that they who gave Credit to me are as mad, at least, as myself ; and therefore desire they may be sent to B---m to bear me Company. Nor will I despair, Sir, of the Honour of seeing you there ; for, if what the Gentlemen said concerning your *Fr-- Enq--ry*, be true, it would be a Breach of Christian Charity, not to wish you may be found qualified for our Society.

I am, Sir, &c.



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